

DOCUMENTARY FILM: *ACCIDENTAL SHAKESPEARE*

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Thesis Prepared for the Degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

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According to the *American Heritage College Dictionary*, the word “community” derives from the Latin roots: *communitas* and *communis* meaning “fellowship” and “common,” respectively. The word “amateur” derives from the Latin roots: *amator* meaning “lover.” A community of amateurs, who love to put on plays, exists within the Denton Community Theatre. Their first attempt at classical theatre was the January 2006 production of *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Brad Speck. The film follows two actors (through observational shooting) – Kevin Wickersham, a waiter who is trying theatre for the first time, and Jeffrey Johnson, a theatre college student trying Shakespeare for the first time – as they relate to a process and community that is new to them.

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APPROVED PROPOSAL

Title: *Accidental Shakespeare*
Shooting Format: miniDV
Length: 25 minutes

The American Heritage College Dictionary defines the word *community* as follows: “1a) A group of people living in the same locality and under the same government. b) The district or locality in which such a group lives. 2) A group of people having common interests. 3a) Similarity or identity b) sharing, participation, and fellowship. 4) Society as a whole; the public.” The word *community* derives from the Latin roots: “*communitas*” and “*communis*” meaning “fellowship” and “common,” respectively.

The definition for the word *amateur* is as follows: “*noun* 1) A person who engages in an art, a science, a study, or an athletic activity as a pastime rather than a profession.—*adj.* 2) Made up of amateurs. 3) Not professional; unskillful.” The word *amateur* derives from the Latin roots: “*amator*” meaning “lover.” A community of amateurs, according to dictionary definition, would be a social group of people who are sharing and participating within a common interest that they all love.

Accidental Shakespeare explores the relationships and working environment of an all-volunteer, or amateur, community theatre group as they work to put together and perform a play by William Shakespeare: the romantic tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*.

Although classical theatre is often associated with “high art,” these amateur actors living in a north Texas town, successfully created a high quality production in their spare time. The documentary’s framework is the chronology of that theatrical process: from auditions, to rehearsals, to performances, to the striking of the set. The documentary’s

focus is the camaraderie of a handful of people—one of them a neophyte actor—who spent 10-15 hours a week for 10 weeks on this endeavor. Approximately 65 people make up the cast and crew for the *Romeo and Juliet* production: 40 cast, 25 crew, with five persons doubling as both cast and crew. *Accidental Shakespeare* documents how the process of the play production creates unique relationships among a diverse group of volunteers.

The Denton Community Theatre (DCT) was created in August 1969 by the Greater Denton Arts Council (GDAC). Denton is a community of 100,000 located in the north central portion of the state. Since its inception, the DCT has produced plays, musicals, children's theatre, and educational programs for all age groups and worked from a variety of locations, including an abandoned fire station and the local community center. Finally, in 1995, the DCT found a home in Denton's Campus Theatre, a vintage movie house built in 1949 and renovated in the 1990s. The DCT currently leases the building from the GDAC.

The DCT is run by a board of directors, governing board members, and a production committee. It is staffed by a managing director and an administrative assistant. A typical season at the DCT includes five main stage shows—including musicals—and three summer musicals (Denton Community Theatre Website).

Romeo and Juliet, written by William Shakespeare in the first decade of his career and based largely on Arthur Brooke's poem *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet* (1562), was a story "already well known, in Italian, French, and English" (Wells, 335). The play is one of Shakespeare's most enduringly popular productions and features a rich assortment of memorable characters (Wells, 335).

PREPRODUCTION RESEARCH

Subject Matter Research

In Shakespeare's time, actors and the acting profession were not viewed as positive contributors to society. According to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen to the Privy Council in 1597: "1. They are speaciall cause of corrupting their Youth...2. They are the ordinary places for vagrant persons...3. They maintaine idlenes...4. In time of sickness it is fowndby experience, that many hauing sores and yet not hart sicke take occasion hearby to walk abroad and to recreate themselves by heareinge a play" (Nagler, 115-116). Despite this negative reaction from municipal authorities, plays were popular as public pastimes. An excerpt from John Webster's c. 1615 treatise on the acting profession describes an excellent actor thus: "Whatsoeuer is commendable in the graue Orator, is most exquisitly perfect in him; for by a full and significant action of body, he charmes our attention: sit in a full Theater, and you will thinke you see so many lines drawne from the circumference of so many eares, whiles the *Actor* is the *Center*" (Nagler, 126).

Today, 400 years later, community theatre groups are still performing plays to live audiences around the world. "Community Theatre is essentially theatre at the local level, amateur or volunteer in origin and spirit, yet not necessarily nonprofessional; for indeed the contemporary Community Theatre is professionalizing in certain places without necessarily giving up its local roots and volunteer dependence" (Gard, 3).

The theatre industry of modern times has expanded to three major areas: professional, educational, and community. Of these, community theatre is probably

most similar to the theatre of Shakespeare's time in that it a) serves the community where it is located, b) often involves the municipal authorities in a financial or oversight capacity, and c) depends upon a core group of actors who live in or near the same community that the theatre serves. A significant characteristic of community theatre actors is that they volunteer their time and talents for the theatre while usually holding a full-time job elsewhere.

The concept of community theatre as we know it today in America began in 1915. "The basic problem seems to be the finding of proper means to develop the idea of contemporary Community Theatre as a great cultural and artistic force rather than as a mere recreational adjunct to community living" (Gard, 3-4). The fact that it took more than 35 years, from its founding, before classical theatre was attempted at the DCT begs the question: Does modern community theatre struggle for public recognition of the legitimacy of its product?

The Characters

As noted above, the DCT's first production of a Shakespeare play in 35 years opened in January 2006. Kevin Wickersham—a 21 year-old who had just moved from Mississippi—played the role of Sampson, a servant to the Capulets (Juliet's family). Walking home from work one day, Wickersham passed by the Campus Theatre marquee where auditions for *Romeo and Juliet* were being advertised. Even though he had no previous experience in theatre at the time, he decided to try out. Jeffrey Johnson—a 19 year-old university theatre student with some experience in high school and church plays—played the role of another Capulet servant, Gregory. Johnson had

never acted in Shakespearean drama before, and since he had been rejected by several university productions, he decided to expand his horizons by performing in classical community theatre.

As the documentary's central characters, Wickersham and Johnson reminisce about their experiences in *Romeo and Juliet*; while exploring the processes involved in staging the play and serving as introducers for the community of actors and support technicians involved in this production. Among those introduced are some stalwarts of the DCT: Brad Speck, director of *Romeo and Juliet* and the mastermind behind getting board approval for the project and U'nita Sweatmon, the vocal coach.

In producing and directing this documentary, I have drawn upon my education in the field of Drama (Bachelor of Arts, University of Dallas, 1998), as well as my experience in educational, community, and professional theatre—which includes adapting, directing, and acting in Shakespeare productions. I also spent five weeks in England in the summer 2005, mostly in the London area, during which I attended two performances at the Globe Theatre.

Since I was present at most rehearsals and performances of the DCT's *Romeo and Juliet*, I soon became a familiar fixture and was thus able to put the cast and crew at their ease while shooting the documentary. Additionally, I re-acquainted myself with the story of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* before shooting by reading the following: Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales From Shakespeare*; *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*; and Mr. Speck's adaptation (which was used for the DCT production).

Goals of the Production

When I began shooting, one cast member said jokingly, “this better not be a *Waiting for Guffman*...” and I responded, “that is up to you.” However, they are rightly sensitive about films like *Waiting for Guffman* (1996), which is a mockumentary feature about a community theatre group, and *Bigger Than The Sky* (2005), which is a fiction feature about a community theatre group. In these two films, community theatre actors and crews are depicted as freaks with immature and unrealistic ambitions. These movies focus on the strangeness of the character’s personalities and lives. *Accidental Shakespeare* will focus on the actors’ lives within the world of the *Romeo and Juliet* production and how that world creates a community within a community: a community of “regular people” creating “high art.”

Accidental Shakespeare is created for an American audience with little knowledge of community theatre. Although it is an entertaining piece, it will mostly hold an audience within educational and community arts programs. The documentary primarily examines the acting process, camaraderie, and personality of the actors within the community. The documentary will also portray the process of producing a classical Shakespeare play.

Funding and Distribution

Possible funding and resource possibilities are as follows:

- Humanities Texas Media and Mini-Grants – the state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities to support research, education, and public programs in the humanities.
- Theatre Development Fund – a non-profit organization for the performing arts which includes arts education programs.
- National Association of Schools of Theatre – the national accrediting agency for theatre and theatre-related disciplines.
- Educational Theatre Association – an organization that promotes and strengthens school theatre.
- Texas Commission on the Arts – a state-funded commission for Texas artists.
- International Theatre Training Exchange – a global organization that promotes the arts and arts education throughout the world.

Possible distribution includes: educational institutions, community arts programs, theatre organizations and conferences, local PBS (community programming), and festivals. Other distribution possibilities include:

- The Theatre Channel – established by TTC Communications, Inc. to provide a structure for development of a wide variety of original programs dedicated to theatre for pay-per-view and video on demand.
- Cable in the Classroom – provides cable content and technology to expand and enhance children's education (on all subjects) nationwide.
- Pioneer Drama Service – publishes and distributes plays and theatre resource materials.

Potential screenings at film festivals and conferences are as follows:

- Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival, Hot Springs, Arkansas
- Dallas Video Festival, Dallas, Texas
- Columbus International Film and Video Festival, Columbus, Ohio
- The American Alliance for Theatre in Education Conference – an organization that promotes standards of excellence in theatre and theatre education.
- International Federation for Theatre Research Conference – an organization that promotes collaboration and the exchange of information between individuals and organizations concerned with theatre research.
- Educational Theatre Association Conference – an organization that promotes and strengthens school theatre.
- The Arts Education Partnership Conference – an organization that explores how the arts can transform American education.
- American Association of Community Theatre Conference – an organization providing resources and a national voice for community theatres.
- Texas Non-Profit Theatres, Inc. Conference – a service organization for all non-profit theatres in Texas.
- American Society for Theatre Research Conference – provides an organization and public voice for theatre scholars and promotes the cause of theatre as a field for serious scholarly study and research.
- Southwest Theatre and Film Association Conference – a regional association that fosters interaction and exchange among those engaged in all aspects of theatre and film through an annual conference, publications, advocacy, and support.

- International Amateur Theatre Association Conferences (Theatre USA under the North American Regional Alliance) – promotes amateur theatre on an international level.
- University Film and Video Association Conference – an international organization of members who share the interest in making and teaching film and video.

INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRODUCTION

As the primary camera operator, I followed characters and their activity in an observational manner: capturing interaction between the characters, as well as interaction between the characters and myself. Characters were not asked to repeat anything or to locate themselves in a particular area. If lighting or positioning was awkward, the camera operator compensated because that is the camera operator's responsibility and not the characters'. Sit-down interviews were shot during and after the production run with multiple characters, including: Mr. Wickersham, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Speck.

The documentary is an exploration of this particular group of people producing this particular *Romeo and Juliet*, through the eyes of new actors (Mr. Wickersham and Mr. Johnson). Wickersham and Johnson are not main characters, as in a novel; instead, they are like a hub that connects the audience to the people and processes of the production. The documentary consists of only observational visuals with voiceover because the audience needs to be completely surrounded by this community—just like people who experience entering a new community. Talking head interviews would break the sense of immersion.

My shooting approach and basic framework for the film was influenced by D.A. Pennebaker. In *Moon Over Broadway* (1998), Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus of Pennebaker-Hegedus Films, documented the production of *Moon Over Buffalo* from press conference to closing night performance. The framework of the film is the chronological order of the process, including graphics to inform the audience of time and location. Multiple characters are followed throughout the process and intercut with

short clips of performance scenes. I used a similar framework, based on the chronology of the production process. I used performance footage of Mr. Wickersham and Mr. Johnson's scene to open the film.

Pennebaker is sensitive to his characters, as I was to mine. During the shooting of the recording of the song, "Ladies Who Lunch" in *Original Cast Album: Company!* (1970), the actress Elaine Stritch went through many takes. Pennebaker claimed that Stritch invited the camera in, and then pushed it away. "I could almost feel it physically" (commentary). His sensitivity influences him to interact directly with characters and to include the interaction in the final film, as long as it is permitted by the characters. In the 2004 panel discussion hosted by the Museum of Television and Radio, Pennebaker was asked about his relationship with his characters while filming. He responded that "you love 'em," the example provided was one of his performing arts documentary, *Depeche Mode 101* (1989). Hegedus filmed some interaction between Pennebaker and the lead singer of Depeche Mode during a concert shoot, and also filmed Pennebaker filming the concert. Both shots were included in the released film because of the friendship which developed between filmmakers and characters. Pennebaker's process of filmmaking is directly affected by the characters, who shape the process of the event, the filmmaking of the event, and ultimately, the story.

The filmmaker's developing relationship with the characters shapes the story as well. In *Don't Look Back* (1967), Pennebaker is observing Bob Dylan and the musicians' touring process. Pennebaker does not attempt to be an unobtrusive "fly-on-the wall." Pennebaker knows his characters, and knows that the camera affects them. He allows the characters to interact directly with him. Therefore, a strong relationship

develops between filmmaker and character: “Dylan, who got along well with Pennebaker, called him ‘The Eye’...” (Couchman 98). One can imagine Pennebaker and Dylan as two people developing a relationship. As Pennebaker explains, “You’re not making *Candid Camera*. It’s just that you’re separate from the camera, and you can be part of a situation. An example is the shot when Albert’s cursing the hotel guy; the camera is sitting on my shoulder, and Dylan turns and laughs. He’s not laughing at the camera, he’s laughing at me, because it doesn’t look like I’m filming anything” (Couchman 100). Pennebaker and Dylan had a relationship that was directly communicated: the character can laugh about an event or happening with the filmmaker. I developed such a relationship with my characters. At first, they were occupied with the camera. After I had filmed them for about three weeks, they became more occupied with me (as a person), and less occupied with the camera. Thus, I became an accepted member of their community, and they interacted directly with me. I include some of this interaction in the final film.

My interaction is influenced by the Maysles brothers’ *Grey Gardens* (1976). My level of interaction with the characters includes some conversation, similar to *Grey Gardens*, because the characters insisted upon it. “For example, ‘big’ Edie and ‘little’ Edie Beale would not ignore the presence of the camera and crew, that is, learn to behave as ‘proper’ subjects of a documentary film. In spite of this situation (or possibly because of it), the Maysles brothers decided to continue and make *Grey Gardens* even though it has a ‘look’ which is different from their other films. In one sense, the filmmakers were allowing the circumstances of the shooting to dictate the form of the film, which consequently revealed the process and producer” (Corner, 43). In *Grey*

Gardens, the audience can tell when the characters are speaking to the filmmakers by where they are gazing and the responses by the filmmakers. At times, the Maysles seemed hesitant and timid with their responses. I, unlike the Maysles with *Grey Gardens*, responded to and questioned the characters with purpose. In scenes where there is interaction between the characters and myself, I include my voice in the film because of the significant relationship I built with the characters as I became a part of their community. They welcomed me “into the fold” as if I were one of them; thus, I did not try to hide my presence as a filmmaker.

The community members were also aware of the documenting process. I was asked questions such as, “How many hours of footage do you have now?”, “How long will the final product be?”, and “What is your take on this?”. I allowed the interaction while observing and shooting, which is crucial to my documentary: “Through a consistent use of camera-influenced situations, especially without win-lose structure, the nature of the camera-subject interaction becomes considerably clearer” (Mamber 185). I was building a temporary friendship with my characters because of the documentary filming process; just as the cast and crew members were building their own relationships because of the production process. The production process and characters of *Romeo and Juliet* did not provide a “win-lose structure” because everyone accepted their activity as a struggle, and continued to work without complaint. The focus is not a crisis, but a culmination of a communal relationship. I am including some self-reflexive footage that reflects that culmination. It happened naturally, by character initiation, and it accurately reflects the bonding that occurs during a play production.

My use of character voiceover is influenced by Jennifer Fox's *An American Love Story* series (1999). Voiceover came from character interviews and are arranged and mixed in post production over observational footage. In my documentary, the voiceover provides an inside look at the thoughts of the characters as they engage in the production process. For example, in Episode 9 of *An American Love Story*, "It's My Job," the family grapples with their eldest daughter looking for a job while she is still living at home. The observational footage of the dinner table scene provides some silence, where the shot settles on Bill's irritated facial expression. Then you hear his voiceover: "This is my house, my rules—get a job or get the fuck out." Throughout the series, the voiceovers are rarely placed over dialogue interaction of the main characters; usually the voiceovers are placed during characters' silence or contemplation, wide establishing shots, or cutaways.

Visual graphics with a freeze frame of the main character are used to identify the main characters of the documentary as they appear in the film; so the audience will know which character each voiceover belongs to. Diegetic music performed for the live productions are used as they are in the production, and also at the opening and closing of the film. Cutaways are placed with different audio recorded at the same time and location, to tell or clarify the story or sequence.

PRODUCTION

Equipment and Crew

Principal shooting began with auditions on October 23, 2005, and ended with the last performance and festivities on January 28, 2006. Retrospective interviews with Mr. Johnson and Mr. Wickersham were shot during the spring and summer 2006. I used only University of North Texas equipment during production. I edited on my own system, using Final Cut Pro® (FCP), version 5.0.4 non-linear video editing software (Apple Computer, Inc., Cupertino, CA, www.apple.com). Prospectus Defense successfully occurred on May 9, 2006. Thesis Defense is planned for November 2006.

My crew members were Tania Khalaf as additional Camera for the performances of *Romeo and Juliet*, Jessica Schoenbaechler as additional Sound for the Auditions and Readings, and Patricio Salinas as additional Sound for the pick-up Dress Rehearsal (where close-ups of the performance were shot). I performed the functions of Producer, Director, Camera, Sound, and Editor.

Schedule

The production and post production schedule is as follows:

- Initial invitation from Brad Speck, the director, to shoot a documentary of the *Romeo and Juliet* production via professor Ben Levin
20 Oct 2005
- Introduction of the filmmaker, talent release forms distributed and collected, shooting at Campus Theatre, 23 Oct 2005 and 25 Oct 2005 (2 days)
23 Oct – Auditions
25 Oct – Call backs

- Shooting at Rehearsal Hall, 01 Nov 2005 – 21 Dec 2005 (11 days)
 - 01 Nov – First read-through
 - 08 Nov – Line and Fencing rehearsals
 - 10 Nov – Fencing rehearsal
 - 11 Nov – Line and Fencing rehearsals
 - 17 Nov – Line and Fencing rehearsals
 - 28 Nov – Second read-through
 - 29 Nov – Blocking of first half of play
 - 13 Dec – Scene work (Sean and Johnny)
 - 15 Dec – Scene work (Sean and Johnny)
 - 19 Dec – Scene work (Abe and Joshua)
 - 21 Dec – Scene work (Abe and Joshua)

- Shooting at characters' workplaces—The Cupboard, 03 Dec 2005 and 09 Dec 2005 (2 days)
 - 03 Dec – Sean and Johnny at work
 - 09 Dec – Sean and Johnny at work

- Shooting at characters' homes, 19 Dec 2005 – 05 Aug 2006 (7 days)
 - 19 Dec – Sean at home and interview
 - 16 Jan – Johnny at home with Sean (tonsure creation—the friar head shave—and Bryant family interview)
 - 23 Jan – Sean at home; interview
 - 28 Jan – Johnny's home for cast and crew party (closing night)
 - 12 March – Sean at home; interview
 - 29 June – Jeff interview
 - 05 Aug – Kevin interview

- Shooting at Campus Theatre 02 Jan 2006 – 11 March 2006 (15 days)
 - 02 Jan – second half run-through
 - 09 Jan – first half run-through
 - 10 Jan – Run-through (Sean and Johnny)
 - 11 Jan – Run-through (Joshua)
 - 12 Jan – Run-through (Abe)
 - 15 Jan – Dry tech rehearsal and some construction
 - 16 Jan – Full dress rehearsal (backstage)
 - 19 Jan – Opening night (backstage)
 - 20 Jan – I was an audience member; no shooting
 - 21 Jan – Audience shots
 - 25 Jan – Full dress rehearsal (on stage-close-ups and jib shots)
 - 27 Jan – Performance (from audience; house and mezzanine)
 - 28 Jan – Closing night (backstage)
 - 29 Jan – Strike

11 March – Brad interview

- Post Production (my own system with FCP) 15 Aug 2006 – 15 Dec 2006
- Distribution and Film Festivals 15 Dec 2006 – 31 Dec 2007

Releases, Copyright, and License Agreements

Talent release forms have been received from everyone who appears in the documentary. Location release forms have been received for the Rehearsal Hall, Campus Theatre, and The Bryant home. Music performed in the *Romeo and Juliet* production will be used in the documentary, as it was recorded during rehearsals and live performances.

Music includes three instrumental pieces performed live by musicians, who were costumed cast members of the production. The following songs were performed from *Shakespeare's Songbook*, by Ross W. Duffin: "The Ratcatcher," based on a tune from *Tom a Bedlam* (circa 1659); "Walsingham," based on a tune by William Byrd (circa 1600); and "When Gripping Grief," attributed to Richard Edwards (circa 1600). Madrigal songs performed were: "Fair Phyllis" by John Farmer (late 16th century), "April is in My Mistress Face" by Thomas Morley (late 16th century), "The Silver Swan" by Orlando Gibbons (late 16th century and early 17th century), "Matona Lovely Maiden" by Orlando di Lasso (late 16th century), "My Bonny Lass She Smileth" by Thomas Morley (late 16th century), "O Eyes of My Beloved" by Orlando di Lasso (late 16th century), "I Know a Young Maiden" by Orlando di Lasso (late 16th century), "So Well I Know Who's Happy" by Orazio Vecchi (late 16th century), and "Sing We and Chant it" by Thomas Morley (late

16th century). All songs are public domain, and the performers gave permission for performance use in writing.

Budget

The documentary was produced with in-kind donations. The total cost of the film was \$40,456. The production equipment was provided by the University of North Texas, Department of Radio, Television, and Film as part of my Master of Fine Arts studies. Production crew and post production equipment were provided by in-kind donations. The amount of cash spent on the film was \$1,415. See Appendix B for detailed budget.

POST PRODUCTION

The editing was completed in December of 2006 on my own system, using FCP. Graphics were created in LiveType® textual graphic software for non-linear video editing (Apple Computer, Inc., Cupertino, CA, www.apple.com). Sound problems were fixed and finished in Final Cut Pro, because observational footage lends itself to sound problems and inconsistencies. The main challenge of editing observational footage is the transitioning between shots with inconsistent visuals and/or audio. I was the only shooter for the observational footage with one boom mic. For most of the shoots, the boom mic was affixed to the camera. I am using an article from *Post* magazine referring to editing field audio from observational footage. Music from the play was recorded live (from the boom mics and the theatre's sound system), and mixed in FCP.

I decided not to use animation, effects, or montages of any kind (except for the graphic titles of the opening and closing credits and name titles for the characters). The observational footage represented the characters in an organic and immediate sense. I did not want to interrupt that with talking heads or effects. The font for the credits and titles are Blackmoor, which provides a simple medieval look. Basic color correction, desaturation, and brightness altering, for the video footage, was used as necessary.

With approximately 55 hours of observational, interview, and performance footage shot, for a 25 minute final product—under 1% of all the footage I shot was used. The majority of the editing process involved sifting through the footage. I followed and interviewed characters I later chose not to use, because, with observational shooting, you sometimes discover who your characters are and what your focus is, as you are shooting. The goal is to create a cohesive story with solid characters while in the

process of learning about the characters and the overall story. This leads to large amounts of footage to watch and organize into a concise product.

The film opens with the stage managers' audio, from their headset feed, to give context of the community's purpose: performance (specifically, the opening scene of the play with Mr. Wickersham and Mr. Johnson). Then the audience is introduced to Wickersham's new experience with auditions. Footage of the performance is provided towards the end, so the audience can see the improvement and the final product the new actors display. Through Wickersham and Johnson's voiceover, the audience gets commentary captions regarding the activity and the community. Wickersham and Johnson are the only voiceovers used because they are new members entering a community for the first time—the audience observes the activity they observe, and meets the people they meet. After the final rehearsal, the performance begins. Once again, the stage managers give us context and tension related to the starting of a live performance. The film closes with the striking of the set: Wickersham and Johnson, like the rest of the community, go on with their daily lives and jobs, and hope to see each other again. As Wickersham states in the closing voiceover, “regular people should be doing this sort of thing.”

APPENDIX A
RESUME

LAUREL ANN PETTY

Office Address:
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EDUCATION

University of North Texas – Denton, Texas

Master of Fine Arts degree, Documentary Film Production, Department of Radio, Television, and Film, with minor in Electronic Media Art, School of Visual Arts. Course work and thesis completed, December 2006; graduation date, May 2007. Studied abroad in Great Britain: London, Birmingham, and Norwich. June 2005

Collin County Community College – Plano, Texas

Courses in American Sign Language, Deaf Culture, and Small Business Management. August 2000 – December 2003

University of Dallas – Irving, Texas

Bachelor of Arts degree, Drama, Department of Drama, with minor equivalent in Fine Art, Department of Art, and Teacher Certification Program. August 1993 – May 1999
Studied abroad in Europe: Italy, Greece, Spain, Switzerland, and Austria. January – May 1995

PROFESSIONAL ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, University of North Texas, Department of Radio, Television and Film. Assistant editor for Assistant Professor Joonhee Park's documentary about North Korean refugees. September – December 2006.

Teaching Assistant, University of North Texas, Department of Radio, Television, and Film. Audience Research. Introduction to research processes and approaches pertaining to mass media audiences. September – December 2006.

Assistant to General Manager, University of North Texas, KNTU Radio Station. Maintained traffic logs, payroll, and pledges. May 2006 – July 2006.

Teaching Assistant, University of North Texas, Department of Radio, Television, and Film. Perspectives on Film. Introduction to skills of film analysis. January – May 2006.

Teaching Assistant, University of North Texas, Department of Radio, Television, and Film. Film and Television Analysis. Introduction to qualitative methodologies used to study film and television. August – December 2005.

Equipment Room and Edit Lab Monitor, University of North Texas, Department of Radio, Television, and Film. Maintain production and post production equipment, rentals, and technical inquiries for students, faculty, and staff. September 2004 – present.

Audio/Visual Assistant, Collin County Community College, Media Services Department. Maintained and delivered multimedia equipment and media for students, faculty, and staff. August 2000 – July 2001.

Teacher, Coach, and Tutor, St. Paul the Apostle School. Fourth grade (Math, Science, English, and Religion), Middle School (Speech Coach, and Math & Study Tutor). August 2002 – July 2003.

Teacher and Coach, Nolan Catholic Junior/Senior High School. High School (Drama and Speech courses), Junior High School (Drama and Art courses—including the adaptation of medieval and Shakespeare plays, and assisting students' adaptations of fairy tales, for the bi-annual Junior High School performances), and Junior High Speech Coach. January 1999 – August 2000. Sponsored the High School's International Thespian Society troupe to the International Thespian Festival at University of Nebraska, Lincoln. June – July 2000.

Scene Shop Tech, University of Dallas, Department of Drama. Set and light construction for mainstage theatre productions. September 1996 – May 1997.

Art Gallery Staff, University of Dallas, Department of Art. Set up art exhibits for the main gallery. September 1993 – May 1995.

PRODUCTIONS

Visual Media Completed:

Accidental Shakespeare. October 2005 – December 2006. (Documentary, Running Time: 25 minutes) Producer, Director, Camera & Sound, and Editor. Two new actors join the local community theatre's first Shakespeare production.

A Vector of Opinions, September 2005 – May 2006. (Experimental Documentary, Running Time: 15 minutes) Producer, Director, and Animator. An exploration of the culture and language of mathematics through two students, one professor, and a filmmaker.

Walking Through Tall Grass, January – May 2006. (Documentary, Running Time: 25 minutes) Offline Editor. The challenges and triumphs of a three-year-old boy who wears prosthetic legs.

Day to Day, September – October 2005. (Documentary, Running Time: 17 minutes) Sound Recordist. An examination into the personal struggles and joys of parents with children who have special needs.

The Highest Form of Patriotism, December 2005 – January 2006. (Documentary, Running Time: 18 minutes) Camera. Two Peace activists share their personal history, motivations for public dissent, and why we should all take a more active role in our future.

Product Development Department Promo for Trinity Workplace Learning, July 2005. (Promo, Running Time: 5 minutes) Director and Post Production Supervisor. Interviews with department employees about how their work saves lives, along with archival footage of the respective employees' programs.

Department Destinations: Park City, Utah and Anchorage, Alaska for Fire Emergency Training Network (FETN), Trinity Workplace Learning, July 2005. (Spots, Running Time: approx. 1 minute each) Offline Editor. Overviews of the local fire departments that hosted the FETN training programs.

a poem is a poem, February – May 2005. (Experimental Documentary, Running Time: 11 minutes) Producer, Director, Camera & Sound, and Editor. An exploration of the sights, sounds, and culture of a Finnish Deaf man's poem.

Lesli the Weaver, January 2005. (Documentary, Running Time: 10 minutes) Producer, Director, Camera, and Editor. An artist explains why she uses an ancient process as a pure art form.

Theatre Productions Completed:

Lot 13: The Bone Violin. Festival of Independent Theatres at the Bath House Cultural Center, Dallas, Texas, 2003. Actress: Doctor.

See How They Run. Onstage in Bedford, Bedford, Texas, 2000. Actress: Ida.

Casa Rio. Hispanic Playwright's Festival at the Fort Worth Theatre, Fort Worth, Texas, 2000. Actress: Cathy.

Celebrate the Arts: The Written Word 2000. Ruth Millican Center, Euless, Texas, 2000. Read a short story and excerpts from novels.

The Triumph of Love. New Theatre Company at Theatre Too, Dallas, Texas, 1998. Assistant Director and Sound Board Operator.

The Isle of the Dogs. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1997. Actress: Viola Zardoni.

The Fall of the House of Usher. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1997. Director, Set Designer & Construction.

The Maids. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1997. Light Designer.

Subject to Fits. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1997. Actress: Aglaya.

Twelfth Night. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1996. Actress: Maria.

The Cat and the Moon. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1996. Irish Step Dance Choreographer.

The Second Shepherds' Play. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1996. Costume Designer.

The Bald Soprano. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1996. Assistant Light Designer and Actress: The Maid.

Mandragola. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1996. Actress: Lucrezia.

Paid on Both Sides. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1996. Stage Manager.

Spring Student Productions. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1996. Light Construction and Board Operator.

L'île des Esclaves (in French). University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1995. Director and Actress: Euphrosine.

Enrico IV. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1995. Set Construction.

Fall Student Productions. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1995. Set and Prop Running Crew.

The Oresteia. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1994 and Epidaurus, Greece, 1995. Actress: Maidservant and Fury.

Quattro Personaggi in Cerca D'Autore (in Italian—an adaptation of *Sei Personaggi in Cerca D'Autore*). University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1994. Director and Adaptor.

The Birds. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1994. Actress: ensemble.

La Celestina (in Spanish). Teatro Dallas, 1994. Actress: Tristan.

Romeo Seeks Juliet. CanalFest, Las Colinas, Texas, 1994. Actress: ensemble.

The Miser. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1994. Stage Manager.

After Midnight Before Dawn. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1994. Make-up.

An Evening of Experimental Theater. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1994. Prop Design and Construction.

Brontosaurus. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1993. Actress: Assistant.

Fall Mainstage and Student Productions. University of Dallas, Irving, Texas, 1993. House Manager, Cashier, and Usher.

Visual Media in Progress:

A Man's Life (working title). Producer, Director, Camera & Sound, Editor, and Animator. An interactive documentary about a man's experience of childhood, work, marriage and family, World War II B-24 pilot, and the final years.

Industry Experience:

Charlie Uniform Tango, a commercial post production house in Dallas, Texas. DVD authoring and burning with Sonic systems, created promo stills for print from editors' work and managed the Tape Library database.

September – November 2005.

Trinity Workplace Learning, a field/studio production, post-production, and distribution house for training videos and programming in Carrollton, Texas. Produced promo, edited program spots and voiceovers, assisted shooting and acted for current productions. July – August 2005.

Dallas Community Television (DCTV), the public access center for Dallas, Texas. Facilitator, Teacher & Assistant Teacher, and Crew for various member and DCTV produced field, studio, & mobile shoots and post production activities. June 1996 – January 1998.

Attend and participate in local, national, and international organizations, workshops, seminars and expos related to the media industry. 1998 – present.

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

University of North Texas, Texas Public Education Grant, 2005 - 2006
University of North Texas Grant, 2004 - 2006
University of North Texas, International ED Fee Scholarship, 2005
University of North Texas, Billy Bob Harris Scholarship, 2005
University of North Texas, Radio, TV, and Film Department,
Lab Monitor of the Year, 2004 – 2005
Collin County Community College, invitation to the Alpha Mu Tau Chapter
of Phi Theta Kappa (International Honor Society for two-year colleges),
2001 and 2002
Collin County Community College, Emerging Scholar,
Humanities and International Studies Department, 2001
AmeriCorpsVISTA Grant, 1998
University of Dallas, Art Scholarship, 1993 – 1997

SERVICE TO THE INDUSTRY, UNIVERSITY, AND COMMUNITY

Current Board Member (Leadership Team), Media Communications Association-International, Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter, assisting the Communications Chair. Organization member since 2004.

Current Member, University Film and Video Association.

Current Member, National Press Photographers Association.

Current Member, Texas Motion Picture Alliance.

Volunteer Log/Digitizer, for Associate Professor Melinda Levin's documentary about sustainable ranching, University of North Texas, 2005.

Volunteer Program Assistant for the Texas Panhandle Film Commission's Fourth Annual Reel Texas Panhandle Film Festival, and Volunteer Visual Translator for Blind student watching films, Amarillo, Texas, 2005.

Volunteer Technical Director and Teleprompter for NTTV News, University of North Texas, 2005.

APPENDIX B
BUDGET

SUMMARY BUDGET

Fringe Assumptions:
 Payroll Tax 0
 WGA 0
 DGA 0
 SAG 0
 Agency Fees 0

ACCIDENTAL SHAKESPEARE

Shoot Days 38
 Location Denton, Texas
 Unions None
 Production miniDV
 Off/On-Line miniDV
 miniDV, approx. 30
 Finish mins.

SUMMARY BUDGET

01-00 Script	125		
02-00 Producers Unit	1,650		
03-00 Direction	3,500		
TOTAL ABOVE-THE-LINE			5,275
04-00 Set Operations	200		
05-00 Camera	13,360		
06-00 Sound	1,580		
07-00 Transportation	84		
08-00 Craft Services	40		
TOTAL PRODUCTION			15,264
09-00 Editorial	16,050		
10-00 Post Production Sound	950		
TOTAL POST-PRODUCTION			17,000
11-00 General & Administrative	990		
TOTAL OTHER			990
TOTAL BELOW-THE-LINE			33,254
Total Above-The-Line			5,275
Total Below-The-Line			33,254
Total Above and Below-The-Line			38,529
Contingency at 5%			1,927
GRAND TOTAL			\$40,456
IN-KIND			
DONATIONS			\$37,114
ACTUAL BUDGET			\$1,415

EXPANDED BUDGET

ABOVE-THE-LINE	TOTAL	DONATION	VENDOR
01-00 Script			
01-01 Documentary Script	125	125 - in kind	L.Petty
TOTAL FOR 01-00	125		
02-00 Producers Unit			
02-01 Producer	1,650	1650 - in kind	L. Petty
TOTAL FOR 02-00	1,650		
03-00 Direction			
03-01 Director	3,500	3500 - in kind	L. Petty
TOTAL FOR 03-00	3,500		
BELOW-THE-LINE			
04-00 Set Operations			
04-01 Grip/2nd Camera Operator	100	100 - in kind	T. Khalaf
04-02 Grip Expendables	100	100 - in kind	UNT, RTVF
TOTAL FOR 04-00	200		
05-00 Camera			
05-01 DP/1st Camera Operator	3,500	3,500 - in kind	L. Petty
05-02 Camera Package Rentals	9,500	9,500 - in kind	UNT, RTVF
05-03 Stock	360	360	
TOTAL FOR 05-00	13,360		
06-00 Sound			
06-01 Mixer/Boom and Mic Operator	200	100 - in kind	J. Schoenbaechler
		100 - in kind	P. Salinas

06-02 Sound Package Rentals	1,330	1,330 - in kind	UNT, RTVF
06-03 Sound Expendables	50	50 - in kind	UNT, RTVF
TOTAL FOR 06-00	1,580		
07-00 Transportation			
07-01 Gas/Mileage for all crew	84	84 - in kind	crew
TOTAL FOR 07-00	84		
08-00 Craft Services			
08-01 Food for crew	40	40	
TOTAL FOR 08-00	40		
09-00 Editorial			
09-01 Off-Line Edit	12,500	12,500 - in kind	L. Petty
09-02 On-Line Edit	500	500 - in kind	L. Petty
09-03 Transcribing	2,000	2,000 - in kind	L. Petty
09-04 Dubs/Transfers	1,000	1,000 - in kind	UNT, RTVF
09-05 Stock	50	50	
TOTAL FOR 09-00	16,050		
10-00 Post Production Sound			
10-01 Sound Mixer	300	300 - in kind	L. Petty
10-02 Layback	130	130 - in kind	L. Petty
10-03 Mix	520	520 - in kind	L. Petty
TOTAL FOR 10-00	950		
11-00 General & Administrative Expenses			
11-01 P.R. Materials	350	350	
11-02 Festival Entries, fees & materials	300	300	
11-03 Telephone/Fax/Internet	200	200	
11-04 Copying	25	25 - in kind	UNT, RTVF
11-05 Postage	15	15	
11-06 Office Equipment and Supplies	100	100	
TOTAL FOR 11-00	990		

Contingency at 5%	\$1,927
GRAND TOTAL	\$40,456
IN-KIND DONATIONS	\$37,114
CASH BUDGET	\$1,415
Total Above-The-Line	\$5,275
Total Below-The-Line	\$33,254
Total Above and Below-The-Line	\$38,529

REFERENCE LIST

An American Love Story, Volume 5, Episode 9 "It's My Job." Prod. Jennifer Fox. Dir. Jennifer Fox. 1999. VHS. First Run/Icarus Films. 1999.

Bigger Than The Sky. Prod. David Arquette, Steven Siebert, Mark Burton, Al Corley, Bart Rosenblatt, Eugene Musso. Writ. Rodney Vaccaro. Dir. Al Corley. 2005. MGM Home Entertainment. 2005.

Couchman, Jeffrey. "The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan." *American Cinematographer*. 28 (December 2002) 94 - 100.

Denton Community Theatre. The Greater Denton Arts Council. 21 Nov 2005.
<<http://www.dentoncommunitytheatre.com>>

Depeche Mode 101. Prod. Frazer Pennebaker. Dir. Chris Hegedus, D. A. Pennebaker, and David Hawkins. 1989. (referred in *To be or not to be, in the picture: The Documentary Filmmaker and the Search for Truth*. The Museum of Television and Radio. VHS. 2004.)

Don't Look Back. Prod. Albert Grossman, John Court, and Leacock Pennebaker, Inc. Dir. D. A. Pennebaker. 1967. DVD. Docurama. 1999.

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Gard, Robert E. and Gertrude S. Burley. *Community Theatre: Idea and Achievement*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1959.

Gen. ed. Stanley and Gary Taylor. *William Shakespeare, The Complete Works*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Grey Gardens. Prod. Maysles Films, Inc. Dir. David Maysles, Albert Maysles, Ellen Hovde, and Muffie Meyer. 1976. DVD. Criterion Collection. 2001.

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Mamber, Stephen. *Cinema Verite in America: Studies in Uncontrolled Documentary*. Cambridge: MIT 1974.

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Original Cast Album: Company!. Dir. D. A. Pennebaker. 1970. DVD edition (including D. A. Pennebaker commentary). Docurama, 2000.

Ruby, Jay. "The Image Mirrored: Reflexivity and the Documentary Film". New Challenges for Documentary. Eds. John Corner and Alan Rosenthal. 2nd ed. London: University of Manchester Press, 2005. 34 – 47.

The American Heritage College Dictionary. 3rd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.

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